

Screen MONSTERS

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Issue #1



Written by
RON ROCKETT

Edited by
BILL CUCCINETTA

Interior Illustrations by

CHUCK HYMAN	1
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COMIC ZONE PRODUCTIONS STAFF

•
Rich Rankin
Publisher /
Editor

•
Patricia Rankin
Publisher /
Public Relations

•
Bill Cucinotta
Art Director /
Editor

•
Rachelle Rankin
Production



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Screen MONSTERS

Frankenstein. Just close your eyes and say the word and I'll bet the image of a giant plodding monster thrashing through the countryside, terrorizing all who might see him, will come to mind. Thanks to Universal Studios we all know this beast with the flat head, the cold stare, and the metal spikes in his necks. But the story goes much deeper than that, both before and after this particular fiend.

If only Mary Shelley knew what she was starting when she concocted the story. All she was trying to do was scare the crap out of her husband and Lord Byron on a dark and stormy night (well, I don't know if it was really stormy or not, but it sounds a lot better). It was a contest of sorts, sitting around making up stories to see who could out-do the others. I mean it was 1816 for God's sake. What else could they do for fun?

Not only does she win the contest but she comes up with one of the coolest novels of all time. Frankenstein or Modern Prometheus was what she called it. I think most of us know the story; a scientist tries to play God by creating life—creating immortality. The experiment backfires and he makes a mad monster instead.

For almost a hundred years the written word worked its own. Various stage productions brought the story to life, but mod-

ern technology caused a need for a different telling. Moving pictures were invented.

Suddenly huge reproductions of life were projected on a big screen in the front of a darkened room. Audiences watched as giants walked, ran, and jumped. The images kicked and fought with exaggerated realism that left the viewers wanting more.

Science fiction filled that void. The imagination was not the limit. People could now fly to the moon or fight mythological beasts, so why not bring the dead back to life? Yes, the dead would be given life once more!

Along came Thomas Edison. Every little kid knows about Edison's inventing the light bulb, phonograph, and stuff; but it was his movie studio that first provided the means to put the Frankenstein monster on the screen.

Ninety four years after the story was given life, the first filmed version was made. In 1910, a sixteen minute black and white silent film entitled simply Frankenstein, was produced by Edison.

In this version the monster is created through a chemical reaction. It was an experiment to create the perfect human specimen. Of course the plan runs amok. Instead of a superman being produced, the monster



F R A N K E N S T E I N



shows up. The doctor freaks out by what he's done and the monster runs away.

So sickened by what has transpired, the doctor needs to be nursed back to health by his fiancée. Once back on his feet they plan to be married; however, on the wedding day the monster reappears, shaking everything up.

Love conquers all and the doctor realizes his ways are in dire need of a change. As he decides to be the bad guy no more, the beast fades into oblivion. Oooh, spine tingly stuff. Short and sweet, just enough to get the ball rolling.

In 1915 the first feature length adaptation was made. Called "Life Without Soul", this one brought the story into the present. Shot in various actual U.S. locations, it gave the viewer a real feel for it now.

This time the doctor was named Frawley and his monster was simply "the creation." Interjected were actual shots of blood coursing through veins, cell formations, and fish reproduction to add to the realism of the experiments. Color tinting of the film added to the mood. It was pretty nifty stuff; but nobody seemed to care that much.

Not many bothered with either version.

The monster also showed up in a couple of serials. In 1916, the last episode of "The Mysteries of Myra" included a "thought monster" conjured up by "The Master of

Black Order." Some name, huh?

A Harry Houdini serial entitled "The Master Mystery" (1918) had a mechanical monster called "Robot Q the Automon." He was a typical metal man with a bucket head and big ping-pong ball eyes. He did have one big difference from the other robots. He had a human brain. Same story with a twist; using parts to bring back inanimate objects.

Nothing much happened to our hero for another thirteen years. It was then that the doctor and his creation would become household words.

Here begins the Universal years. From 1931 until 1948 Universal Studios had sole copyrighted possession of the monster and his maker. First, however, they had to work out a deal with Gaumont-British for the rights. Gaumont-British had announced their film version in November of 1930.

Once rights had been obtained, casting had to be done. Carl Laemmle, Jr., the producer of the film, hoped that he had found a new Lon Chaney in Bela Lugosi. Lugosi had been a major success in "Dracula" and since he was in a two film contract, a back up movie had to be made. "Frankenstein" would fit the bill.

A comparison was made to a British stage production in which Hamilton Deane played the monster. He had also portrayed Dracula on stage. It worked well for them so Laemmle tried it too.

Screen tests of Lugosi were shot with





him in makeup created by Jack Pierce. Two reels were shot by Robert Florey, an experimental film maker who had been given the director's job. The old Castle Dracula was used as a background and Lugosi clumped around in a big wig and clay-like polished skin. He looked like the Golem.

Everybody thought the tests stunk. Carl Laemmle thought the atmosphere was much too romantic in content and not nearly scary enough. Lugosi declined to take the part and Florey quit. The project was shelved.

Meanwhile, James Whale, a British stage director had done well with two films. In 1930 he had made "Journey's End" and more notably "Waterloo Bridge" in 1931. Given a choice of thirty or so scripts to pick from for his next work, he chose "Frankenstein."

His theatrical background would bring a style to the screen that, through staging and lighting, would add greatly to the dark feel of the film. Since his friend Colin Clive had done so well in Journey's End, he was chosen to play Doctor Baron Frankenstein. Without Lugosi, however, someone had to be found to play the monster.

Sitting around the studio commissary, Whale noticed a gaunt big player whose face fascinated him. With sunken cheeks and eyes, this guy looked like he hadn't eaten in weeks even after he had just finished a meal. His name was Boris Karloff. Quietly, Whale made sketches of Karloff; cartoony stuff with big heads. The idea for a new monster was born.

The Lugosi style makeup was thrown out for a more scientifically plausible head. Cut and stitched and clamped together, the new makeup now had a flat head to show where the skull was cut to plop in a new brain. Studs were put into the neck for the electrical hook up. Wax on the eyelids gave a more deathly look and wiring in the face gave a look of muscular atrophy.

The makeup took three and a half hours to apply every morning and an hour and a half to remove at the end of shooting each day. From head to toe the whole suit weighed forty-eight pounds, including steel struts in the legs and back, two pairs of pants, and eighteen pound asphalt spreader boots.

The film was shot in total secrecy inside an enclosed sound stage. Karloff was led from place to place with a cloth on his head. He even had to eat alone. Nobody outside the crew knew what he looked like.

The secrecy worked. Even a warning at the beginning of the film giving the viewer a last chance to leave added to the suspense. When the audience got its first glimpse of the creature . . . well, a sneak preview in Santa Barbara brought so many nasty letters that the studio had to tame it down before general release.

For anybody who doesn't know, the story goes something like this; the doctor and his assistant, played by Dwight Frye, rob graves of the freshly dead to get body parts to use in the construction of a patchwork man. The only missing ingredient was a brain.





Doctor sends assistant out to the local university for the purpose of stealing the brain. He breaks into the lab and grabs a good brain but is startled by a noise and drops the container. Not wanting to return empty handed, he then grabs an abnormal one. Oops, and he didn't even tell the doctor of the switch.

The doctor sticks the brain into the head of the cadaver and through the magic of electricity (a reenactment of Ben Franklin's kite bit actually) the being is brought to life. A finger twitch on the beast sends the doctor into spasms of joy. Little does he realize what horror he's unleashed on the Earth.

The misunderstood monster traipses across the countryside, exploring and learning and generally minding his own business. The problems start to arise when he begins to run into people. He means no harm but he looks so darn ugly that anyone who sees him panics.

A scene in which the monster throws a little girl into a lake in the hopes that she will float was considered too much and was originally cut out from the release print. The girl was the first person not to flee from the monster. She was throwing flowers into the lake, making boats. She shares her flowers with the monster and he begins to do the same.

When his supply runs out, he looks for something more to throw. This is where the film was cut. Instead of seeing the monster innocently tossing the girl into the water and watching her sink, the scene cuts to her

father carrying her wet, lifeless body through the town. The scene has since been restored.

The child's murder sends villagers into a fevered pitch and they grab pitchforks and torches to hunt down the monster. They track him down and chase him into the windmill. The doctor enters the mill for what will be the final encounter.

The monster is the better of the two and throws the doctor off the top of the mill. It should have been a fatal fall, his body catching on the windmill blades before crashing to the ground, but we'll talk about that later. The incensed crowd sets fire to the mill putting an end to the threat, believing the monster is dead.

The ending of the film was changed to show the doctor recovering from his fall. As he lies being nursed from his wounds, his father offers a toast "to the son of the house of Frankenstein." This softer ending seemed easier to take and added a prophetic moment to the upcoming sequels (gee, if he'd only known about the bride, ghost, or Albert and Costello, he could have toasted them, too).

Who can forget Colin Clive's almost insane cry of "It's alive . . . it's alive . . . it's alive . . . it's alive" or the first spark of life in the monster's hand? What about the first close-up of his eyes through the bandages on his face?

The monster commands our fears yet gets our sympathies, for after all, it's not his fault. He didn't ask for an abnormal brain to be popped into his head. The evil he does is

In Loving Memory of
Helen





not his own. Sometimes he seems almost childlike. Who is the real monster, doctor, or creation?

The film was a big financial success which was, of course, great for the studio; but it was also great for the fans since it helped spawn a whole bunch of sequels.

So what can you do with a poor guy that's been hunted down by a mob of screaming vigilantes, chased into an old windmill, burned at the top of the mill, left for dead, and had any memory of his existence cursed for all time? Why, you get him a girlfriend of course!

In 1935, that was the opinion of the big wigs at Universal as they put together a film to try to cash in on the popularity of *Frankenstein*. They called it "The Bride of *Frankenstein*."

She was a radiant beauty wrapped in a flowing combination of a wedding dress and a funeral shroud. Her hairstyle would be more popular today than it was back then; kind of punky, you know. She had charm enough to calm the most savage beast. It was a match made in heaven, or should have been.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. First, the monster had to be resurrected from the smoldering ash. I mean, he should have burned to a crisp; but, through the miracle of Hollywood there just happened to be a running spring flowing right under the windmill, and, well you can figure out the rest. Yup, he got saved. All he had to do was wait

in the water until somebody came to pull him out and havoc would strike all over again.

More critically acclaimed than its predecessor, *The Bride of Frankenstein* brought Colin Clive, Boris Karloff, and Dwight Frye together again as doctor, monster, and bumbling assistant. James Whale returned to direct again and Carl Laemmle Jr. once again produced.

New to the cast was Elsa Lanchester who was cast both as Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley in an introductory scene, and also as the Bride herself. Also new was Ernest Thesiger who played Dr. Pretorious, both ally and enemy to Dr. Frankenstein, and the one to assist in the surgical construction of the bride. He had been conducting experiments of his own in the creation of life but could not make anything taller than eight inches.

This film does have the one scene that seems to be most memorable of all either before or after, in which the monster meets the blind man deep in the woods. Here, in the man's cabin, the monster first learns the joys of smoking and drinking. He reveals that he can speak (smoke good, fire bad!).

He also learns the pleasures of listening to music by having the old man play for him on the violin. He drinks and drools and keeps the beat as the blind man fiddles away.

All is serene until a sighted hunter stumbles upon the cabin and sees the monster. Everybody freaks out and the beast runs away only to be captured later.





What makes this scene so memorable is the emotional feel we get from the monster for perhaps the only time in all the films. When allowed to be truly free, he becomes as relaxed and as happy as anyone could hope to be.

It's not until the experiment to make him a mate fails, that we see how miserable he is with his existence. The creation of the female in itself is successful but she can't stand the sight of our hero. At first glance she shrieks and hisses like a cat, so repulsed was she by his appearance.

This makes the monster really unhappy and he decides to take just about everybody to Hell with him. He tells Frankenstein to leave but tells Pretorius, "we belong dead." He then pulls a switch and blows the lab to bits. Once more the world could sleep at night knowing the Frankenstein monster was dead again.

That is, for about three years.

Now, we've seen the creator could not control his creation nor could a mate tame his spirit. What other character could be brought into the storyline to try the same? A son, yeah that's it! A son, deaf to the lunatic ravings about his father. A son with the strength and curiosity to carry on his father's experiments. A son would surely want to finish his father's work. And finish he did.

The Son of Frankenstein was made in 1939, same studio but a different cast and crew. This time Rowland V. Lee produced and directed with a budget far above either of

the first two.

The film was originally slated to be shot in Technicolor and the money was allotted for such. Tests of Karloff in makeup were so bad, however, that the idea of color was scrapped and black and white was once again used. All the sets and costumes were constructed with color in mind, so they all had to be redone with the black and white scheme. So now the budget dropped to reflect the changes.

Basil Rathbone had the title role of Wolf von Frankenstein and put in a wonderfully dry performance. His yell of "He's alive" on his first encounter with the monster was remarkably similar to that of Colin Clive in the last two films.

Lionel Atwell played the part of a one armed constable overseeing the village. His affliction is made more pathetic when it is disclosed that the monster was the one who ripped the arm from its socket and kept the man from fulfilling his life's dream of serving in the army. He is left with a command of eight policemen.

It was the man who was to play the creature in the first place, however, that almost stole the show. Bela Lugosi's performance of Ygor put that name on nearly everyone's lips. It was to be just a small part, but he was so good that the script kept changing to give him more scenes. As the script kept growing, so did the budget and it went back up again.

Ygor was a former shepherd with a



Reine Series '92



part time job of robbing graves. He could have gotten away with tending sheep, but the body snatching got him hung. The hanging didn't take and, although pronounced dead, he lived to talk about it. Except for a serious crook in his neck and some real bad dental work, he was none the worse for wear. Ygor was considered dead by villagers so he had to find a place to stay, a recluse. Castle Frankenstein was thought of as haunted or cursed or both, so it was left alone by all. It made the perfect place to hang out. Of course, you'll never guess who Ygor runs into inside the castle.

It was Lugosi's first appearance in a "Frankenstein" film, but sadly it would be Karloff's last as the creature.

Here the monster seemed bigger, meaner, even more violent than before. In one of his earliest scenes in this film he was hoisted high into the air strapped to a lab table. The lighting in the shot was such that you could not see his feet, giving the illusion of an eight foot monster.

Here, also, the monster gets a real good look at himself and he does not like what he sees. He catches the reflection of a hideous image in a lab mirror. After toying with some cable, he realizes that both he and the image are one and the same. Some good angry grunting goes on here.

No explanation is given for the monster's continued existence, or for his relationship with Ygor. The fact is he just can't die. Simple. Ygor says it himself. He just can't die. Godzilla must have taken some

lessons from this guy (but that's another book).

What made him super powerful was figured out by Wolf after examining his father's papers. While carrying out the original experiments, not only was electricity harnessed for power, but so were "cosmic rays." Nobody even knew what cosmic rays were when the monster was first brought to life, let alone that they controlled the continuance of all life (and turned people into super-heroes). Gee, so the monster really was supernatural after all.

But what made things bad for Karloff was the fact that the monster had become nothing more than a killing machine. No longer were there any nuances that gave the creature personality. He did nothing but follow his master's bidding.

What he did was to kill all who were on the jury that convicted Ygor. One by one they were picked off in grisly manner. Also, anyone in the village who gave Ygor a hard time was fair game.

It left the monster totally one dimensional and unsympathetic compared to the richness of the earlier portrayals. Karloff refused to play him again.

The one endearing trait the creature had would lead to his eventual downfall. He was loyal if nothing else. When Ygor met his death, the monster became so enraged and alone that he had to lash out at those who killed him. In a brief glimpse of intelligence, we see the beast in deep thought, apparently





deciding how to seek his revenge.

He would kidnap the Baron's son.

He takes the boy back to the laboratory and proceeds to smash the equipment or throw it down into a sulphur pit below. Established earlier in the film, the sulphur now boiled at an excess of eight hundred degrees.

In swings the baron (a-la every swash-buckler film ever made) and kicks the monster into the fiery pit. Poof! The monster should be dead. The village is saved. Heck, the world is saved.

As Wolf von Frankenstein leaves town with his family to get on with their lives, the good Baron gives the villagers back the title to their village, and to the castle itself, for them to do with as they see fit. The villagers applaud Frankenstein now; a turn-about from the beginning of the film. A happy ending.

Loznging in the healthful effects of an eight hundred degree sulphur bath should have been the end of our hero, don't you think? But no, more was yet to come.

1942 brought in "The Ghost of Frankenstein", the first film to be made without Boris Karloff as the monster. During the thirties, Universal Studios had put together a cast of regulars as did all the major studios. Actors worked under contracts and had to perform solely for whichever studio they were signed with.

This fact had helped Warner Bros. with their gangster fare and it definitely helped Universal and their monster pictures. As Humphrey Bogart, James Cagney, or Edward G. Robinson were easily recognizable as the hoods of the day, so Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Dwight Frye, and Lon Chaney, Jr. were the monsters.

Lon Chaney, Jr. was obviously the son of Lon Chaney, Sr. Duh! But beyond that fact, (I mean what kid could grow up in a family like that and not be influenced a little bit?) Chaney, Jr. had proven to be pretty scary on his own and was signed to a five year contract. After playing the "Man Made Monster" and "The Wolfman" in 1941, it seemed it was his turn to portray the monster in Ghost of Frankenstein.

Bela Lugosi returned as Ygor (how he comes to life is a mystery to me) and pulls the monster out of the sulphur pit. Remember that was eight hundred degrees in the last picture. Ah, Hollywood. Ah, artistic license.

So anyway, the story opens with Dwight Frye blowing up Castle Frankenstein and Ygor hopping out of the rubble. He pulls the monster up. The monster is pretty weak but luckily gets zapped in the head during an electrical storm. He feels like a new man so it's off to find the doctor in a place called Vasania.

The same recognition factor that helped some in many ways was a hindrance to others. Basil Rathbone had become Sherlock Holmes so another son had to be invented. Ludwig von Frankenstein was his





name and he was played by Sir Cedric Hardwicke. Wow, a young girl's dream. A whole family of doctors.

They find the doctor and he wants to dissect the monster but the ghost of his father visits him and talks him out of it. So that's where the title comes from.

In the meantime, Ygor has become a good buddy to Frankenstein's assistant played by Lionel Atwill (coo, these same names keep popping up just like in the Mercury Theatre). Tired of his cruddy body, Ygor talks Atwill into transplanting his brain into the monster's body. Okie-doke.

When the monster comes back to consciousness he speaks with Ygor's voice. Ygor is happy, he is immortal. Doc Frankenstein is sad because he made his father's evil creation even worse.

Justice isn't blind, however. The monster is! "What good is a brain without eyes," he screams as he throws Atwill into some electrical equipment starting another destructive fire.

Everything burns up and the world is safe from the name of Frankenstein again. Yeah, right.

Universal released *Ghost of Frankenstein* on Friday the thirteenth. Slick move. The director was Erle C. Kenton who had directed "*Island of Lost Souls*" in 1932.

By 1943 there were just too many monsters running around for them to avoid

bumping into each other. So they did. Universal brought its two most popular copyrighted monsters together in "*Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman*."

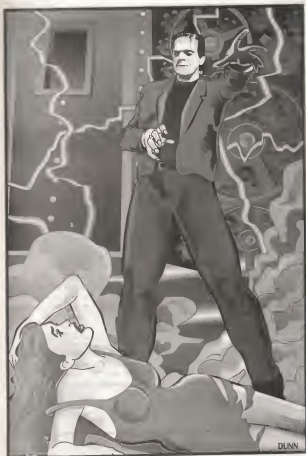
The most intriguing thing about this film was the man who played the Frankenstein monster. All these years after it was first offered to him, Bela Lugosi finally took the role. A stuntman named Eddie Parker did most of the work since Lugosi was getting ill, but he was there for all the speaking parts. Don't forget that it was Lugosi as Ygor who had his brain put into the monster, so the vocal aspects were a natural.

The reason a new actor had to play this monster was the fact that Lon Chaney, Jr. would not let anyone else play the Wolfman, which he considered his baby. He couldn't play both parts so Lugosi was given the part.

In what was a pretty reasonable script written by Curt Siodmark, Larry Talbot (a.k.a. the Wolfman) was seeking out Doctor Frankenstein's papers. He had heard that the doctor's experiments could cure him of his lycanthropy, the disease that caused him to get overly hairy during the full moon.

Under the ruins of the Frankenstein house, he finds the remains of the monster encased in ice. Well, of course he must set the beast free or there wouldn't be a movie. The monster is still blind and tromps around with his arms straight out in the stereotyped Frankenstein walk.

As always there must be a doctor to



DUNN



mess around with the monster and this time he's played by Patric Knowles. The doctor not only gives the monster back his strength, but also his sight. This plan might be good for the monster, but it stinks for everybody else, so the Baroness (there always has to be a baroness, too) sabotages the laboratory and causes an explosion.

This causes the monster to explode into hysterics which causes the Wolfman to change. This brings on the inevitable battle. While they duke it out, the townspeople blow up the closest dam letting enough water crash down to crash the castle and flush out its' inhabitants.

Directed by Roy William Neill and produced by George Waggner, the film succeeded in keeping the fading popularity of the collective monsters alive and giving cause for the following all-star monsterfests yet to come.

The next would be *House of Frankenstein*.

1944 and 1945 saw the onslaught of the monster epic films; in which they try to put as many monsters in as many situations as possible. The "*House of Frankenstein*", followed by "*The House of Dracula*" were the first attempts by Universal to cash in on the complete line-up of their copyrighted monsters.

Let's see, there was John Carridine as the Prince of Darkness, Lon Chaney, Jr. as

the Wolfman, Glenn Strange in his first appearance as the Frankenstein monster, Lionel Atwill as the inspector, J. Carroll Naish with a double whammy; he was a mad scientist and a hunchback, but most importantly — Boris Karloff was back as the owner of the side show containing all these wonderful creatures.

He is the typical overachieving vivisectionist who escapes from jail (we're really talking overachiever) only to obtain the Chamber of Horrors that held the bones of the decomposed Dracula himself.

He sets the spirited Dracula free, bringing him back to life only to be fired by dawn's early light. He then finds the bodies of the Wolfman (a.k.a. Larry Talbot) and the Frankenstein monster both frozen solid, preserved in ice. He promptly revives them (if he didn't there wouldn't be a movie).

The movie itself was pretty silly but it did allow for the original monster to tutor the new. Karloff on the set made it much easier for Glenn Strange to get into his own portrayal of the walking cadaver.

Strange as it was (ooh, that's a groaner), Glenn Strange was not the first choice for the monster. A western actor named Lane Chandler was to play him, but Strange's head and facial features fit the makeup much better, so he was given the role.

Not much was achieved with this





movie except to open the doors for 1945's "The House of Dracula."

The House of Dracula was another choking attempt by Universal to keep the dream alive by putting all the mayhem makers together once more. Again, it lacked the honest horror of the earlier films, but this time it was as if they knew it and played for goofs.

The Wolfman tries to be cured by another loony doctor; this one tries to soften his skull and remold it to a much more pleasing shape. Dracula tries to get cured by the same guy but the attempt fails and the doctor becomes a vampire instead. Dracula melts in the sun again (what's new?).

Of course the Frankenstein monster gets revived again (if he didn't this movie wouldn't have included him, I guess) and, like in House of Frankenstein, he had to be destroyed by the Wolfman.

What was particularly eventful about this film was the end of the relationship between the Monster and Jack Pierce. No more would he apply the prosthetics that created the illusion of the horrific man-monster. It's almost like he could see the handwriting on the wall.

There would be but one more film from Universal including the "patchwork" man. How many times can you pass a zillion volts through something before it burns out?

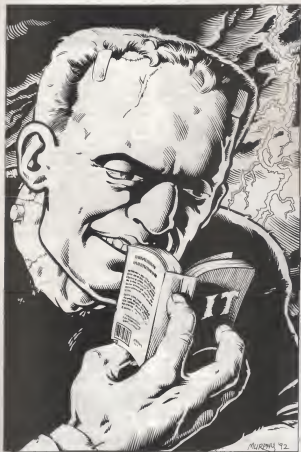
Now an era would be over. It seems that no matter what generation we're from, we become secure with those things that last without worry of their loss. So it was from 1931 until 1948 among fans of horror films. It was that year that Universal finally and unequivocally put the monster out of his misery.

For the last few years a comedy team by the name of Abbot and Costello had been making movies of a passable variety, but it was their teaming with the Frankenstein monster that sky rocketed their careers to the top. What was a beginning for them was an end for the monster, as we knew him.

Yet as the monster could once instill shivers on a dead guy, he was now used strictly for laughs. And it was probably the best usage of the beast in years (a sad day for monster purists).

"Abbot and Costello Meet Frankenstein" marked an end of Universal's association with not only the Frankenstein monster, but also with Dracula. Bela Lugosi came back for one last performance as Universal's version of the Prince of Darkness. His role had the King of Vampires slugging around the lifeless bulk of the Frankenstein monster to try and get him a new brain.

Traditional comic antics putting the whole crew of monsters (the Wolfman was back, too) through their paces was a far cry from the days when a glimpse of haunting eyes peering from behind bandages sent





chills up any given spine.

Bud Westmore was brought in to apply the creature's makeup since Jack Pierce had left and he did an adequate job, but it was Pierce's designs that will remain forever.

With a final collapse on a burning dock, (how could a guy who hated fire so much always end up in it?) our hero sinks into our memories. Even at the end it was his demise that left the feeling of relief in the hearts of the movie's central characters.

Through all the silliness of the last few movies, the monster still commanded respect as one who could raise a bit of hell when given the chance, but it does seem sad that when all is said and done, it was a little fat guy that finally did in Universal's Frankenstein monster.

But perhaps I mourn too much for as it was now time for Universal to lay the creature to rest, it was also time for the rest of the world to catch on to the fever. 1953 finally took the story out of the English language, travelling south of the border to Mexico.

"El Monstruo Resucitado" was the first of the Hispanic fare and was a turn-about of the story as we know it. Here the monster was handsome and the doctor was the ugly one. Because the doctor was so grotesque, he was shunned by his colleagues, causing him to become a reclusive crazy mixed-up plastic surgeon (why didn't he fix

himself?).

He gets the hots for a cutie-pie reporter who was sent to check him out but he's afraid she'll turn on him, so he decides to bring back to life a guy who has just committed suicide by transplanting a new brain into the guy, and has him go out to kill her (man, talk about run-on sentences!).

The monster and the girl screw up the doctor's plans all together by falling for each other. They kill him instead.

The girl's boss, who sent her there in the first place, enters the scene to save her from herself (you know you can't marry a monster, unless he's from outer space; but that's a different movie) and the monster dies in her arms.

This was the first truly gory Frankenstein molded film with lots of bloody surgical scenes, laying the foundation for the rest of the grisly genre films to come out of Mexico in the 50's and 60's.

Another staple of Mexican films of the time was masked wrestlers and 1956 saw the first of many team-ups of the Frankenstein story with such. Transplanting monkey brains into dead guys and turning them into wrestlers; the mind boggles. The film was called "El Ladrón de Cavaderes."

...TO BE CONTINUED IN SCREEN MONSTERS #1-B: The Hammer years and beyond...



FRANKENSTEIN FILMOGRAPHY

The following is what we believe to be a complete listing of films in which Frankenstein has appeared. For those folks with sharp eyes and good memories out there, if we have left anything out, please write to us at: COMIC ZONE PRODUCTIONS, Frank Additions Dept., Rt. 73 & Taunton Ave., Berlin, NJ 08009. FYI: We stop listing whether a film was made in color or not after 1964 as, after that year, they were all filmed in color. —EDITOR

1910	Frankenstein	(Edison)	b/w	16 minutes
1915	Life Without Soul	(Ocean)	b/w	70 minutes
1918	The Mysteries of Myra		b/w	15 chapters
1918	The Master Mystery	(Octagon)	b/w	15 chapters
1931	Frankenstein	(Universal)	b/w	71 minutes
1935	The Bride of Frankenstein	(Universal)	b/w	80 minutes
1939	The Son of Frankenstein	(Universal)	b/w	95 minutes
1942	The Ghost of Frankenstein	(Universal)	b/w	68 minutes
1943	Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman	(Universal)	b/w	74 minutes
1944	The House of Frankenstein	(Universal)	b/w	71 minutes
1945	The House of Dracula	(Universal)	b/w	67 minutes
1948	Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein	(Universal)	b/w	92 minutes
1953	El Monstruo Resucitado	(Internacional Cinematografica, Mexico)	b/w	85 minutes
1956	El Ladrón de Cadáveres	(Internacional Cinematografica, Mexico)	b/w	80 minutes
1957	The Curse of Frankenstein	(Hammer, G.B.)	color	83 minutes
1958	El Castillo de Los Monstruos	(Producciones Solomayer, Mexico)	b/w	90 minutes
1958	Frankenstein 1970	(Allied Artists)	color	83 minutes
1958	Frankenstein's Daughter	(Astor)	b/w	85 minutes
1958	I Was a Teenage Frankenstein	(Santa Rosa Productions)	b/w & color	74 minutes
1958	The Revenge of Frankenstein	(Hammer, G.B.)	color	91 minutes
1960	Orlak, El Inferno de Frankenstein	(Filmadora Independiente, Mexico)	color	103 minutes
1961	Frankenstein, el Vampiro y Compañía	(Cinematografía Calderón, Mexico)	color	80 minutes
1963	The Evil of Frankenstein	(Hammer, G.B.)	color	84 minutes
1963	Santo en el Museo de Cera	(Filmadora Panamericana, Mexico)	color	82 minutes
1964	Kiss Me Quick aka Dr. Breedlove	(Fantasy Productions)	color	80 minutes

1965	Frankenstein Meets the Space Monster	(Vernon-Seneca Films)	78 minutes
1965	Furankenshtain Tai Saragon or Frankenstein Conquers the World	(Toho; Japan)	95 minutes
1966	Anafies Infernales	(Filmica Vespars, Mexico)	95 minutes
1966	Frankenstein Created Woman	(Hammer/Warner Bros.; G.B./U.S.)	92 minutes
1966	Furankenshtain No Kaiju	(Toho; Japan)	88 minutes
1966	Jesse James Meets Frankenstein's Daughter	(Circle Productions)	82 minutes
1966	Munster Go Home	(Universal)	95 minutes
1967	Flick or Dr. Frankenstein On Campus	(Agincoort; Canada)	81 minutes
1968	Frankenstein's Bloody Terror	(Independent International, Spain)	
1968	Santo y Blue Demon Contra los Monstruos	(Producciones Sotomayer; Mexico)	84 minutes
1969	Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed	(Hammer, G.B.)	97 minutes
1970	Blood of Frankenstein	(Independent-International)	91 minutes
1970	The Horror of Frankenstein	(Hammer/EMI; G.B.)	95 minutes
1971	La Figlia di Frankenstein or Lady Frankenstein	(Concor-International; Italy)	99 minutes
1971	El Hombre Que Vino de Umro aka Dracula vs. Frankenstein	(Producciones Jaime Prades, Eichberg Film, International Jaguar; Spain, West Germany, Italy)	87 minutes
1971	Santo Contra la Hija de Frankenstein or Santo vs. Frankenstein's Daughter	(Cinemografica Calderon; Mexico)	97 minutes
1973	Blackenstein	(Exclusive International)	87 minutes
1973	Carné per Frankenstein or Flesh for Frankenstein	(C.C. Champion & Ulean Yanne-Jean-Pierre Rassam; Italy, France)	95 minutes
1973	Frankenstein	(Dan Curtis; ABC)	103 minutes
1973	Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell	(Hammer; G.B.)	89 minutes
1973	Frankenstein: The True Story	(Universal; G.B.)	123 minutes
1973	Frankenstein 1900	(Italy)	88 minutes
1973	House of Freaks or Frankenstein's Castle of Freaks	(Cinerama, Italy)	
1974	Young Frankenstein	(Bruckhoff/Venture Films/Crossbow Productions/Jouer)	108 minutes
1975	Rocky Horror Picture Show	(20th Century Fox; G.B.)	101 minutes
1976	Viktor Frankenstein	(FAV, Sweden/Ireland)	
1976	Frankenstein all'Italiana or Frankenstein Italian Style	(RFA, Italy)	93 minutes
1984	Frankenweenie	(Disney)	28 minutes
1985	The Bride	(Coldelphi III Productions)	119 minutes
1985	Frankenstein's Great Aunt Tillie	(Tills/Filmer Productions, Mexico)	93 minutes
1990	Frankenhooker	(Shapiro Glickenhuis)	85 minutes
1990	Frankenstein Unbound	(Fox)	88 minutes

Zone

OK, for those of you who weren't here for my last regular Zone news column back in March, here's a brief synopsis of what went on. . . I started publishing back in 1986 with Eagle and Crystal Publications, I published for two years and then went back to freelance art and retailing at my store the "Comic Zone" in Berlin, NJ, and then I went back to publishing around about May of 1991. . . Well, that was about as brief as I could make it, of course leaving out all of the details. You'll have to go back to March's books if you want to refresh your memory further. Onward.

One of the things that we tried to determine back in the spring of 1991 was the way in which we wanted to enter back into the already overcrowded super-hero realm of the comic book. We decided, for better or worse, to come back seeking a niche market, that is, one which was small but extremely loyal. One of the things we decided to do was to try to appeal to a market outside the main stream of comics. We were reasonably sure of the difficulty of our task but we were committed to trying it. Looking to the daily newspapers for ideas of

general interest we fell over the decidedly disgusting tale of Jeffrey Dahmer.

Dahmer and his escapades were all over the news and made us aware of the vast interest in these sordid, but true, tales. It's like the ambulance chaser mentality where people just have to stop for a peak at the hor-

rendous accident; "rubber neckers" if you will. Up popped the idea for "PSYCHO KILLERS #1." Our original notion was to go with Jeffrey Dahmer for our first issue, but we decided to wait until all the facts were in and the court case was finished. We wanted our true crime book to be as factual and as



Jack & Karen Herman

complete as possible. The decision was made to go with Charles Manson and his "family" for the first issue, as his was one of the most well known and fully documented cases of recent history. We didn't know at the time that another new comic book company, Boneyard Press, was already planning their version of a Dahmer comic; more about that later.

This was when began the dreaded "Curse of Psycho Killers." Just what is the curse of Psycho Killers? Well, it began when we attempted to

get artists to work on the book. The first issue went pretty smoothly with Stan Timmons, now regular penciller, handling in a superb job. Unfortunately, we were running late with the schedule by this point and needed someone to fill in on both the writing and the art chores on PSYCHO KILLERS #2: David Berkowitz. Nat Gertler filled in nicely with his professional penmanship but that still left the artwork. Without going into all the details, we then proceeded to go through six pencillers over the next two months and came to the brink of throwing up our hands and saying, "I guess this just wasn't meant to be!" Half of the pencillers had tragedies in their families and the other half skipped out on us before handing in a page. Welcome to the realities of a publishers life and the dreaded deadline crunch. By this point, we really were feeling cursed but we pushed ahead and finally, just under the shipping deadline, finished up the artwork on issue #2 and whisked it off to the printers. Whew!

With issue #2 now under our belts, we dove right in to PSYCHO KILLERS #3. Ed Gein. We were anticipating numerous problems but at this point Stan (the man) Timmons came back on board as regular penciller and we've been using him monthly ever since. Of course some issues of PSYCHO KILLERS, the regular series will be fill-ins by other artists; but you'll find Stan offering up his magic pencils in some of our specials like: PSYCHO KILLERS BODY COUNT SPECIALS #1 & 2 and the PSYCHO KILLERS MAILMAN SPECIAL #1.

Of course, I couldn't tell the complete story of PSYCHO KILLERS without talking at length about the invaluable contributions of Jack & Karen Herman. Right from the beginning, Jack's input to Psycho Killers was price-

less. Jack took to the concept of Psycho Killers like a duck to water as he literally submerged himself in the researching of true crime and serial killers. With the able help of Zone research man Tom (the wild one) Bradley, Jack tracked down facts about Manson, Gein, Lucas, Dahmer, and others that most folks would have to read multiple books and news sources to find out. Just check out some of the fascinating facts in PSYCHO KILLERS #1 about Charles Manson and the Manson family. You won't find many of those items mentioned in "Helter Skelter." Jack has been an unending source of inspiration and motivation on Psycho Killers and has been the driving force behind this most cutting edge of comics. Jack's wife, Karen, came on board with PSYCHO KILLERS #4: Henry Lee Lucas; and the PSYCHO KILLERS BODY COUNT SPECIAL #1—Mass Murderers. When we decided to make Psycho Killers a monthly comic, Jack wanted to use Karen's writing abilities to assist him in meeting his deadlines. The collaboration between the two has turned in to much more than that. Karen's aptitude for journalism has made itself evident since joining the staff, especially in the upcoming PSYCHO KILLERS MAILMAN SPECIAL #1 which she penned almost entirely herself.

Anyway, here's to Jack, Karen, Stan, and all the fine folk who've made Psycho Killers the cutting edge comic that it is today. Stay tuned next time for the continuing saga of "the birth of Comic Zone Productions" and the interesting new directions we are taking to put us into the mainstream of publishers.

Later.

Rich

COMIC ZONE PRODUCTIONS

PRODUCT CATALOG

JULY, 1992

Psycho Killers #1 (2nd print)

In this issue take a trip through the life of Charles Manson. Learn little known facts about his life, and his crimes. (September) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #2 (2nd print)

David Berkowitz, the "Son of Sam", is examined in this issue. Why the "Son of Sam"? Something about a dog and his father? Find out the real story. (September) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #3 (2nd print)

In "Silence of the Lambs", did you wonder why the character killed women for their skins? Find out in the story of Ed Gein. What made this man into the killer he became? (September) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #4

Not many people are familiar with the story of Henry Lee Lucas who went on a killing spree with a 12 year old girl. What happened when he told this parole board "I will KILL again", and they let him out anyway. (July) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #5

You have all read and heard the news, now find out the facts. Jeffrey Dahmer, was he one of the most gruesome serial killers? Read his history and decide for yourself. (July) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #6

"The Night Stalker" is a movie and a book, now it's also in comic book format. Read the story of Richard Ramirez and see how a group of kids helped to capture this murderer and criminal. (August) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #7

Judith Barszono, our first lady killer, was a sharp businesswoman, a self-made woman who wouldn't accept defeat. To the man in her life, however, she was a calculating seductress turned deadly murderer. (September) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #8

HISTORIC ISSUE ALERT! John Wayne Gacy, on death row in an Illinois Prison for killing 33 boys and young men, has become an artist while in jail. For the cover of this issue, Gacy has painted a self-portrait; **POGO THE CLOWN**. Gacy used to dress up as POGO to entertain the children. Also in this issue is Gacy's first letter to the media being printed in his own words, **UNGUOT & UNEDITED**. Is Gacy guilty or innocent? Read his words and decide for yourself!

DISCLAIMER: The expressed beliefs of

John Wayne Gacy are his alone and do not represent the beliefs of the Comic Zone Productions publishers or staff members. Our story about the known facts surrounding the Gacy case will be our own personal rebuttal to Gacy's story. (October) \$3.00

Psycho Killers #9

Ted Bundy was the most stypical serial killer ever. What led the handsome, exceptionally bright young man to become a murderer? What in his past caused him to change? What secret was he hiding since his birth? (November) \$3.00

Psycho Killers Classics #1 (New Series)

Albert Fish, born in 1870, was abandoned and sent to a sedistic orphanage. Thus trained, he became a sadomasochist. He did some crazy stuff to himself and to others. When finally caught, why was death in the electric chair "the supreme thrill, the only one I haven't tried" so appealing to him? Why did it take two massive jolts of electricity to kill him? And they say the most violent criminals are the ones around today! (November) \$3.00

Psycho Killer Body Count Special #1

Three short stories of mass murderers. Issue #1 is about Richard Speck, a man who killed a whole dorm room full of nurses. Also, Charles Whitman went "hunting human's" from the top of the University of Texas belflower, hitting almost 50 people and killing 16. Finally, there's the story of Fredrick Cowan, a man who loved Hitler and hated his job, blacks, and Jews. Find out what happened when his boss gave him an unwanted vacation. (July) \$3.00

Psycho Killers Body Count Special #2

Three more short stories about mass murderers. The first story happens back in the 1800's. The Coulters' Brewery, located in what was know as the "Drag" of Manhattan, was the most deadly place in the world to live with an estimated one murder a day for fifteen years! What happened when the building was finally raided? Why, when children were cented out, did they scream at the sight of the Sun? (and they say Philly and New York are bad!) Also in this issue, what would you do if you were in a restaurant and a murderer dropped in? Explore the lives of the man who wrecked havoc on Luby's Cafeteria in Killeen, Texas, and the McDonald's day massacre in Southern California. Could anyone have stopped them? (August) \$3.00

Psycho Killers Mailman Special #1

Once you read this book you'll never look at your mailman in quite the same way. Psycho Killers

Melman Special looks at a horrifying pattern inside America's postal system—mass murder. Examining the tragic events and the possible underlying causes behind them, *Psycho Killers Melman Special* is not to be missed! (September) \$3.00

Psycho Killers MIA Special #1 & 2

This two part mini-series explores the histories of some famous, still missing, serial killers. Do you remember the **ZODIAC KILLER**? **THE GREEN RIVER KILLER**? How about **JACK THE RIPPER**. What made them stop? Will they strike again (except Jack, of course)? (October & November) \$3.00 ea.

SERIAL KILLER (1st Edition)

The board game of the 90's

Designed by gaming expert Tobias Allen, this genuinely designed package includes a game board, a bag of twenty-five babies, four serial killer figures, crime cards and outcome cards, one die, and a set of instructions. All materials come enclosed in their own plastic body bag. This is a must-have one-of-a-kind game that you and your friends will be talking about for a long time to come.
FOR ADULTS ONLY (18 years or older)
Not yet priced

COMPANION BOOKS TO PSYCHO KILLERS

Killer Cults #1: The Jonestown Massacre

This new series will study the bizarre and sometimes deadly practices of different mind-bending cults around the world. This issue focuses on Jim Jones and the Jonestown Massacre, a tragic incident in which hundreds of his loyal followers followed their leader to an early grave. (September) \$3.00

Killer Cults #2: Hell Ranch

This issue explores the satanic rituals of the infamous Mexican "Hell Ranch." Kidnapping, murder, torture, and musical sacrifices were just a sampling of the shocking, inhuman practices occurring at this secluded ranch, and this issue reveals the entire gruesome story! (Nov.) \$3.00

War Criminals #1: Adolf Eichmann

This new series examines the lives and backgrounds of histories most infamous mass murderers; war criminals. First up is Nazi Adolf Eichmann who ordered the ritual slaughter of an entire people. (September) \$3.00

War Criminals #2: Josef Mengele

Known as the "Angel of Death", this Nazi doctor was no angel. He ordered sadistic experiments to be performed and sent thousands to the gas chambers. (November) \$3.00

OTHER COMIC ZONE PUBLICATIONS

Cult Television #1: The Outer Limits

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This companion series to Screen Monsters

chronicles various cult television series, beginning with one of the most famous and well produced science fiction/horror shows of all time—*The Outer Limits*. This issue features an exclusive interview with Donald Sanford, author of the first season episode, "The Guests", as well as a ten-page segment on the birth of the show. (September)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Cult Television #2: The Invaders

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

Continuing this lavishly detailed reference volume, writer Jay Allen Sanford focuses on one of the best alien invasions series of all time—*The Invaders*. Also in this issue is an interview with actor Roy Thinnes, the man who played David Vincent in the original show. (October)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Cult Television #3: The Time Tunnel

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

The original time travel TV series. On the air for only one season, *The Time Tunnel* remains in syndication as several two-hour compilation movies to this day. In this issue, Comic Zone has an exclusive interview with series actor James Darren. (Nov)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Eagle: The Dark Mirror Saga #1 (of 4)

All out martial arts excitement combine with the supernatural to make this four part mini-series an action-adventure tour de force that's not to be missed! (Available now!) \$3.00

Eagle: The Dark Mirror Saga #2 (of 4)

The action continues as martial artist extraordinaire, Eagle, battles the evil forces of Lord Kagami. (Available now!) \$3.00

Eagle: The Dark Mirror Saga #3 (of 4)

Japan is the setting for a battle of unimaginable proportions in this set up to the big finale. (Available now!) \$3.00

Eagle: The Dark Mirror Saga #4 (of 4)

•Regular & Signed-Limited Editions

This is the big one. More action than you can shake a set of nunchaku at. This one's also available in a signed, limited deluxe edition to celebrate the grand finale. (Available now!)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Signed Edition \$6.00

Freaks of Nature #1

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This series examines tales of "Freaks of nature" with each story taking a dramatic look at the shocking, tragic, cruel, and often poignant accounts of these colorful outcasts. First up, Julia Parsons, the "Orangutan Woman"; Pasquel Pinon, the "Two-Headed Mexican"; and Ella Harper, the beautiful "Camel Girl". (September)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Freaks of Nature #2

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

Tom Thumb, Chang & Eng (the world's most famous siamese twins), and JoJo, the dog-faced boy are examined here (November)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Legends & Folklore #1: Vampires

•Regular & Signed, Limited Editions

This new bi-monthly series will examine mythical creatures who may or may not have existed in the distant past! This issue, the most infamous of all legendary creatures of the night—the Vampire. (August)

Regular Edition \$4.00
Deluxe Signed Edition \$6.00

Legends & Folklore #2: Werewolves

This lushly illustrated volume delves into the legend and folklore surrounding one of history's most feared creatures—the werewolf! Where did the legend begin? What is it based on? Do werewolves still exist today? These are just some of the questions we try to answer in this gorgeously produced reference volume. (October) \$3.00

Psychic Phenomenon #1

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This ongoing paranormal series begins with a story of spontaneous combustion called "The Fire Inside". These cases will be studied in dramatic fashion, a la "One Step Beyond". (October)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Screen Monsters #1: Frankenstein

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This new reference series chronicles the many screen appearances of the Frankenstein monster from the early days of film to his most recent incarnations. Also included is a complete film log of the monster's appearances. Take a walk with writer Ron Rockwell thru the monster's life. (August)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Screen Monsters #2: Dracula

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

Again, walk with Ron Rockwell thru this reference chronicle series into the many screen appearances of the Transylvanian Terror, Dracula. Future issues will cover the Wolfman, the Mummy, Godzilla, and the Creature from the Black Lagoon. (Sept)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Screen Monsters #3: The Wolfman

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

That's right, a reference book about the great hairy one (no, not your typical comic shop owner)—the Wolfman. (October)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Super Bowl Chronicles Volume I (of II)

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This two issue limited series chronicles America's great winter event—the Super Bowl. Issue #1 examines the first 12 years of this great contest of champions. Glossy cardstock cover. (November)

Regular Edition \$4.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

Super Bowl Chronicles Volume II (of II)

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This two issue limited series chronicles America's great winter event—the Super Bowl. Issue #2 examines the last 13 years of this great contest of champions. Glossy cardstock cover. (December)

Regular Edition \$4.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

UFO's: Alien Contact #1

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

We are not alone. This new series studies all the facts and the most up-to-date info concerning UFO's and alien encounters. First up, does the US Government really have the wreck of a UFO and its dead occupants in its possession? (September)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

UFO's: Alien Contact #2

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

The most famous "close encounter of the third kind" is examined here, the case of Betty and Barney Hill. (November)

Regular Edition \$3.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

World Series Chronicles Volume I

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This six issue limited series looks at this country's greatest event, the World Series, in a year-by-year fashion. This first volume is double-sized and covers the years 1902-1961. Squarebound format. (October)

Regular Edition \$6.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$9.00

World Series Chronicles Volume II

•Regular & Deluxe Trading Card Editions

This six issue limited series continues and looks at the years 1969-1971. Glossy cardstock cover. (November)

Regular Edition \$4.00
Deluxe Trading Card Edition \$7.00

ADULTS ONLY TITLES

Illustrated Classics #1

The classics are remade in adult format here as issue #1 showcases "Dracula" and "Frankenstein". A real monstrous pairing. (Available now!) \$3.00

UFO's!

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OCTOBER FROM
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